

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-9 (previously cancelled).

10. (original) A machine for filling meat emulsion into elongated natural or artificial casings, comprising, a casing filling station including a stuffing tube for supporting a casing to be filled with meat emulsion, a casing hopper to serve as a reservoir for a plurality of shirred artificial casings mounted on the machine adjacent the casing filling station for delivery of shirred artificial casings for mounting on the stuffing tube, and

means on the machine for rotating the casing hopper away from the casing filling station about a vertical axis for
~~moving the casing hopper away from its position adjacent the casing filling station when natural casings are~~
placed on a stuffing tube in the casing filling station.

11. (cancelled)

12. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein the means for moving the casing hopper includes means for raising the casing hopper, pivoting the casing hopper, and thence lowering the casing hopper for moving the casing hopper away from the casing filling station.

13. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein the stuffing tube is longitudinally movably mounted on the machine, and

means is associated with the stuffing tube to permit adjustment of its longitudinal movement.

14. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein the adjustment of the longitudinal movement of the stuffing tube is comprised of a removable hard stop, or a sensor actuated pneumatic control means.

15. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein at least one sensor is located in the machine to detect when the casing hopper is in its position adjacent the casing filling station; the sensor being operatively connected to a PLC to control longitudinal movement of the stuffing tube and to maintain the stuffing tube in a non-automatic extension mode, to hold a follower connected to the stuffing tube in a retracted position, and to maintain the casing hopper in its position adjacent the casing filling station.

16. (original) The machine of claim 15 wherein a natural casing is placed on the stuffing tube with the stuffing tube in a partially retracted position and with a discharge end being upstream of the casing filling station; the PLC upon being actuated is adapted to cause the stuffing tube to extend through a chuck, and to cause a meat pump to start pumping meat through the stuffing tube when the position of the stuffing tube through the chuck is sensed, and to start the rotation of the chuck and the stuffing tube, and to start the operation of linking chains and a conveyor located downstream from the casing filling station; a sensor on the machine adjacent a twister mechanism containing the chuck to detect the manual advancement of the follower in the proximity of the

sensor to send a signal to the PLC to stop the operation of the casing filling station.

17 and 18 (previously cancelled).

19. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein the means for moving the casing hopper includes means for horizontally pivoting the casing hopper away from the casing filling station.

20. (original) The machine of claim 10 wherein the means for moving the casing hopper includes means for slidably moving the casing hopper away from the casing filling station.

21. (currently amended) The machine of claim 10 wherein the means for moving the casing hopper includes means for pivoting the casing hopper ~~1800~~ away from the casing filling station.

22-24 (previously cancelled)

25. (new) A machine for filling meat emulsion into elongated natural or artificial casings, comprising:

a casing filling station including a stuffing tube for supporting a casing to be filled with meat emulsion;
a casing hopper to serve as a reservoir for a plurality of shirred artificial casings mounted on the machine adjacent the casing filling station for delivery of shirred artificial casings for mounting on the stuffing tube;

means on the machine for moving the casing hopper away from its position adjacent the casing filling station when

natural casings are placed on a stuffing tube in the casing filling station;

at least one sensor located in the machine to detect when the casing hopper is in its position adjacent the casing filling station;

the sensor being operatively connected to a PLC to control longitudinal movement of the stuffing tube and to maintain the stuffing tube in a non-automatic extension mode, to hold a follower connected to the stuffing tube in a retracted position, and to maintain the casing hopper in its position adjacent the casing filling station, when a natural casing is placed on the stuffing tube with the stuffing tube in a partially retracted position and with a discharge end being upstream of the casing filling station;

the PLC upon being actuated is adapted to cause the stuffing tube to extend through a chuck, and to cause a meat pump to start pumping meat through the stuffing tube when the position of the stuffing tube through the chuck is sensed, and to start the rotation of the chuck and the stuffing tube, and to start the operation of linking chains in a conveyor located downstream from the casing filling station; and

a sensor on the machine adjacent a twister mechanism containing the chuck to detect the manual advancement of the follower in the proximity of the sensor to send a signal to the PLC to stop the operation of the casing filling station.

26. (new) A machine for filling meat emulsion into elongated natural or artificial casings, comprising:

a casing filling station including a stuffing tube for supporting a casing to be filled with meat emulsion;
a casing hopper to serve as a reservoir for a plurality of shirred artificial casings mounted on the machine adjacent the casing filling station for delivery of shirred artificial casings for mounting on the stuffing tube; and
a vertical pin rotatably connected to the casing hopper for rotating the casing hopper about a vertical axis away from its position adjacent the casing filling station.